

## **South Dakota Teacher Effectiveness Pilot**

### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

Updated: April 18, 2013

#### **What is the difference between this Teacher Effectiveness Pilot and the pilot that took place during the 2011-12 school year?**

A previous teacher evaluation pilot focused on implementing the South Dakota Framework for Teaching (Danielson Model) and evaluation against those standards. The Teacher Effectiveness Pilot in 2013-14 will allow schools to experiment with components of teacher evaluations required by South Dakota's ESEA Flexibility Waiver, including developing summative teacher effectiveness ratings based both on measures of professional practice (teaching standards) and student learning (student growth) that differentiate levels of performance.

#### **Why should my school consider participating in the pilot?**

All South Dakota schools will be required to begin evaluating teachers using measures of professional practice and quantitative measures of student growth beginning in the 2014-15 school year. Participating in the pilot provides schools with practical experience using state-provided evaluation tools and processes prior to statewide implementation. Participating schools will be asked to inform model practices, identify additional supports and help shape the future of teacher evaluation in South Dakota.

#### **Who developed the evaluation system that pilot schools will be encouraged to use?**

The recommendations are based on work started by the Teacher Evaluation Work Group during the summer of 2012 and expanded upon by the South Dakota Commission on Teaching and Learning (CTL). The work of the CTL represents a system that complies with both state and federal laws, including the state's ESEA Flexibility Waiver.

#### **How many of the 22 components contained in the South Dakota Framework for Teaching will schools be asked to use for the professional practice component of evaluations?**

At a minimum, schools will be required to use at least one component from each of the four domains of professional practice (Planning and Preparation, The Classroom Environment, Instruction and Professional Responsibilities). To ensure sufficient evidence is collected to support professional practice evaluation, schools will be encouraged to examine at least eight components. Schools will have the flexibility to cluster components across the four domains depending on local priorities.

#### **How will pilot schools incorporate student growth as one measure of teacher effectiveness?**

Pilot schools will be encouraged to use a collaborative goal-setting process that allows the teacher and evaluator to agree on how to quantitatively establish, document and assess student learning. Through the goal-setting process, teachers and evaluators will determine expected annual growth relative to the teacher's assignment and student population served. Pilot partners will be provided guidance on how to set student growth goals and how the accomplishment of the goal translates into an overall student growth rating.

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**How will measures of professional practice and student growth be combined to create a summative rating that differentiates teacher performance?**

Pilot schools will be encouraged to assign teachers one rating for professional teaching practice and one rating for student growth. The two separate ratings will be combined into a final summative rating. The summative rating will translate into one of three performance categories: Below Expectations, Meets Expectations or Exceeds Expectations. Emphasis is first placed on the professional teaching practice rating, and the student growth score is used as a check of the evaluation system. A Teacher Effectiveness Handbook will be distributed to pilot schools and will provide guidance and recommendations on how to assign a summative rating.

**Will we have to conduct evaluations that conform to both the pilot model and our local evaluation system at the same time?**

The principles of the evaluation system that serve as the basis for the Teacher Effectiveness Pilots conform to requirements outlined in state law, so the evaluations would meet your legal obligation to evaluate teachers. It will be up to your local district and school board to determine whether participation in the pilot would require teachers to be evaluated using both the pilot and local evaluation models. However, districts are cautioned against using evaluations resulting from the pilot to act as the sole piece of evidence to support high-stakes employment decisions (e.g. termination and renewal).

**Can we participate in the pilot program if our evaluation instrument is part of our negotiated agreement?**

Yes. If your district has negotiated an evaluation system or instrument, the district and local teacher's association can jointly design and sign a Memorandum of Understanding allowing the particular school, or schools, to participate in the pilot.